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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Proposals to Improve Security of Sensitive Information Disseminated Within the Executive Branch

Proposals Affecting Reporting to the Special Coordination Committee (SCC), the SCC Special Activities Working Group (SCC/SAWG), and the National Security Council (NSC)

A. Currently the Agency is required to report to these groups periodically on covert action operations and sensitive intelligence collection programs. The following options would limit the flow of sensitive documentation through these channels and establish tighter and more effective controls over sensitive documents:

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1. Limit to the maximum extent possible compendium reports that place into a single document detailed information on all ongoing covert action and sensitive intelligence collection programs. Specifically, eliminate the requirement for a comprehensive written semi-annual report to the NSC on ongoing covert action and sensitive intelligence programs. A more flexible requirement might call for the NSC to determine in the case of each program the timing of periodic reviews.
2. Adopt a procedure whereby, at the discretion of the National Security Advisor, the SCC/SAWG can be bypassed on highly sensitive programs. In these cases, proposals would be distributed directly to the SCC principals on an Eyes Only basis.
3. Discontinue the practice whereby working drafts of SCC papers are distributed in advance to members of the SCC/SAWG. Future working drafts would be under the control of the SCC/SAWG staff secretary at all times. Under this arrangement working drafts would be distributed in the White House Situation Room prior to the SCC/SAWG meeting and returned to the SCC/SAWG secretary for retention or destruction at the end of the meeting.
4. Number, assign by name, and log all papers sent to the SCC and the SCC/SAWG.

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5. Require that all documents sent to SCC principals other than the DCI be returned to the NSC for retention/destruction upon completion of the review/approval process.
6. Adopt a mandatory rule that SCC documents will not be copied.
7. Adopt standards to minimize the amount of sensitive operational detail to be included in SCC proposals such as the identity of persons, organizations, and sensitive technical data.
8. Consider establishing a new category of compartmented clearance for information on covert action and sensitive collection operations. Require separate secrecy agreements for all persons within the Executive Branch who have this clearance, establish a "bigot" list (a list of persons cleared) for the new category, and restrict access to such information to an absolute "need-to-know" basis. Strictly enforce procedures to require prior clearance and execution of a secrecy agreement before permitting access to documents or attendance at meetings for the discussion of such information.

B. Under E.O. 11905, the intelligence agencies are required to report known or possible illegalities and improprieties to the Intelligence Oversight Board. There appears to be no problem at present in the initial reporting channels. However, the IOB does report to the President, and on occasion may feel it necessary to consult with other government agencies/departments, which in turn may report to the President through additional channels. Steps should be taken to review these channels of reporting, following initial submissions by the intelligence agencies, to ensure restricted access to documents and proper arrangements for their protection.

C. Consideration should be given to providing reports to IOB orally in instances of great sensitivity.

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